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ABSTRACT

This book examines gender, racial/ethnic, and class inequalities in education, analyzing the impact of major reforms and exploring routine practices by which inequalities are reproduced and legitimized. It describes observations and interviews at two British secondary schools that show the costs of reform in terms of pressures on teachers and rationing of educational opportunity. Chapter 1, "Education and Equity," introduces the issue. Chapter 2, "Reforming Education: Policy and Practice," reviews educational reforms in the 1980s and 1990s. Chapter 3, "Ability and Economy: Defining 'Ability' in the A-to-C Economy," describes schools caught within the demands of various reforms and the need to continually raise performance. Chapter 4, "Selection 11-14: Fast Groups, 'Left-Over' Mixed Ability and the Subject Options Process," examines student grouping strategies. Chapter 5, "Selection 14-16: Sets, Tiers, Hidden Ceilings and Floors," considers the further selection and separation that occurs in upper school. Chapter 6, "Educational Triage and the D-to-C Conversion: Suitable Cases for Treatment?," discusses strategies schools use to maximize performance. Chapter 7, "Pupils' Experiences and Perspectives: Living with the Rationing of Education," examines students' views on their experiences. Chapter 8 presents "Conclusions: Rationing Education." (Contains 286 references.) (SM)